has been received as yet on the subject and if you will arrange for an application being made to the Chief Engineer, he will undertake to have the matter looked into.

As regards the opening of a road from the Kanjirapalli-Erattupetta road, 10th mile, to the Edamattam-Tidanad road, if the road is cut by the ryots, the Chief Engineer will undertake to have it maintained provided you act on the advice of the Division Officer in the alignment of the road.

As regards the conversion of the Erattupetta-Arakulam village road into a public road, an estimate is under completion for the first section and the next section will be taken up after the completion of the first.

In regard to the conversion of the Ambara-Mankompu road and the Anthinad-Melukavu road into cart roads an estimate for Rs. 2,700 has been received by the Chief Engineer and it is under examination, *i. e.*, in respect of the portion of the Ambara-Mankompu road.

As for the immediate construction of the Plasanal-Pravitanam road, this has been taken over for departmental maintenance and the Chief Engineer will arrange for funds being allotted for its improvement and proper maintenance.

The bridge you refer to at Erattupetta on the Erattupetta-Punjar road will be taken up after the bridge at Palai.

Then you ask for a bridge over the Kadanad canal. This is on a loop road and the question will be taken up after completion of more urgent bridges.

As regards the bridge at Erattupetta on the Erattupetta-Kanjirapalli road this question will also be taken up after the consideration of the more important bridge at Palai.

As regards your request for all roads being taken up for departmental maintenance, that is a matter which will be taken up as each road becomes suitable for maintenance.

You want a District Court at Meenachil. The matter has been referred to the High Court for consideration.

In regard to the Sub-Registrar's office which you want at Bharananganam, I shall consult the Director of Registration, examine the statistics and see which is the most convenient place where it should be located.

184. Needs of the Roman Catholic Christians.

MR. VARKEY KOCHOUSEPH (*Member, Meenachil taluk, Group I*) said that the Roman Catholic Christians were poorly represented in the public service. In population they were one of the strongest communities of the State. In education they were quite on a par with any other community. In loyalty to the throne and submission to constituted authority they were second to none. They never took part in revolutionary movements or disloyal agitations. But they were not allowed their due share in the administration of the country. Their young men were not able to get admission into several ranks of the public service. They did not want efficiency to be sacrificed for the sake of communal representation. All that they wanted was that among equally competent applicants, those who belonged to less represented communities should be preferred to those who belonged to better represented communities. For the purpose of communal representation there was also another point which Government had to bear in mind. Government should treat Roman Catholics as a separate community by themselves and not include them in the large group of persons known by the omnibus designation of Christians.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Varki Kochouseph, in regard to your representation that Catholic Christians should be given appointments commensurate with their numbers in the State, all I can do is to draw your attention to previous announcements on the subject, one occasion being in this very Assembly last year. The general policy of the Government is this: to hold out equality of opportunity to all communities without sacrifice of efficiency or lowering the standard of qualification. That is the only course that can be followed with equity and justice; and like other communities, it applies to the Catholic community as well.

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Your second request is that the Roman Catholics should be treated as a separate community for the public service. If what you mean is that they are to be shown separately this is already being done. That is what I find in the classification of appointments made of communities.

185. Public service.

MR. K. C. EAPEN (*Member, Trading Classes, Trivandrum*) said that the Assembly was just closing a journey round "tranquil Travancore." They had a pleasant journey all together ; there was no difference at all among them ; it was complete harmony everywhere. But on one thing they differed. When they came to the loaves and fishes of Government appointments, they could not agree. Indeed the disagreement was of the most violent kind. It was on this thorny question that the member wanted to make a few observations.

All that he could do was to exhort his brothers, and even his sisters who had of late come up to assert their rights, to be a little more patient and a little more self-sacrificing. In a joint family, the earnings and the profits made by the grown-up members were divided among the whole family. Similarly, in this family of the State all concessions should be given to the younger and the weaker members —Puduval lands, mid-day meals, fee concessions all. But the management of the family, if it should prosper, should be in the hands of competent men. Many people forgot this fundamental point. Whenever a vacancy occurred in any department they raised the cry of "my community at any cost." They gave the go by to the demands of co-operation. Some would say that appointments should be distributed according to the numerical strength of the communities. Others would say that the guiding factor should be educational advancement. Each had his own axe to grind when he advanced this or that theory. The member did not want to join this struggle and to further complicate the issue.

He only wanted to bring into prominence certain other aspects of the question. He was voicing the feelings of that section of the public, that quiet section which only wanted to enjoy their peace and happiness undisturbed. All that they cared for was the efficiency of the public service. They would not mind even a foreigner being appointed if he could give them justice. At the same time the member did not want to be hard to the backward communities. He could sympathise with their disabilities. Considering all aspects, he could think of two solutions, one institution of competitive examinations and the other appointment of a staff selection board. Competitive examinations should determine the selection from among the advanced communities, and the staff selection board should make the selections from among the backward communities. Even with regard to competitive examinations, difficulties were not entirely absent. There were some people, who whether examiners or heads of departments, could not get rid of the mentality of hating certain communities. It was dangerous to leave the examinations in the hands of such people.

In regard to the appointment of women in the public service, the member said it was only legitimate that they should get a fair share in the administration, seeing that Government had given them all the opportunities for qualifying themselves for the purpose. Not only that, women had already proved their capacity for public service by their successful work on several public bodies.

In conclusion, the member made a few remarks about the working of the Police, Judicial and Medical Departments. In regard to the Police Department, his complaint was that the present Commissioner reposed too much confidence in his subordinates and always went by their recommendations. Of the Judicial Department, the member did not want to say much because some of the previous speakers had already dealt with it. As regards the Medical Department, the member pressed for more sympathy on the part of the doctors towards the patients. It was not merely M. B. and M. D. qualifications that should count in making appointments. The chief criterion should be the possession of the required qualities of mind by the candidates. The Dewan should also make inspections of hospitals and dispensaries and examine the work of the doctors.

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